

# Capenhurst Grange Special School

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Inspector</b>	Jeffrey Banham
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	16 November 2006

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

Capenhurst Grange is a community special school managed by Cheshire County Council. It provides special education for children between the ages of 11 and 16 who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of children are day pupils. At the time of the inspection 11 children were receiving short break residential care normally for two nights a week. Children using the residential provision are divided into a younger group who stay Monday and Wednesday night, and an older group who stay Tuesday and Thursday. The premises consist of mostly single storey buildings in their own grounds. The residential area and administrative blocks are two storey. The residential accommodation consists of domestic style lounges, bathrooms and shower rooms and single bedrooms, some of which are en-suite.

### **Summary**

The inspection was announced and took place over two days. Children receive supportive care from experienced and committed staff. The school is part of the local authority's continuing review of its special educational provision and there is some uncertainty about the nature of the services to be provided by the school in the future. There has been prolonged sickness absence of some members of the residential care staff, including the head of care. The residential team has not been able to implement developments to its services as had been intended. A number of aspects of the management of the service need to improve so that staff can be given a sound practice base from which they can continue to provide effective care to children. These areas for development include better systems for delivering health care to children and to introduce more robust processes for staff supervision and training. The format and process of care plans and file monitoring need to improve in order to give staff an effective framework to support children effectively. The care staff work well with education staff and children to promote children's education progress. Children have ample opportunities to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Improvements have been made to the recording of incidents of challenging behaviour so that it is now possible to differentiate between activities in the school and residential setting. This provides the school with better information that can be used to identify key factors in behaviour management, and so provide better support for children. The safety of children has improved with staff being more informed about their responsibilities in reporting actual or suspected issues of inappropriate staff behaviour. Children are given more direct time with their key worker so that issues important to their care can be discussed, and their identified needs better dealt with.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health care is promoted through the policies and practices of the school. Children's health care history and needs are established as part of the initial admission process and through subsequent review. Children remain registered with their own doctors, dentists and opticians. Care staff work with families and other carers and health care professionals to ensure children

receive all necessary and appropriate routine and emergency health care. Staff help children and young people to take an interest in their health and healthy ways of living. Children's health care needs are generally met through the care provided by supportive staff. Children's physical, emotional and health care needs are recorded into placement plans written as part of the child's overall placement plan. These do not always identify specific health care issues, desired outcomes or the particular actions of staff. Three of the 10 residential care staff have current first aid certificates, the others having expired. Staff have not had specific training in the administration of medication, and there is no regular monitoring of the written record of the administration of medication by a senior member of staff. The school plans for the designated nurse to implement a system of monitoring the administration of medication. Written permission for the administration of first aid, non-prescription medication and other health care treatments that may be required from a person with parental responsibility is not established for every child. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of the importance of healthy eating and to enjoy their food. Staff have a good understanding of what constitutes a good balanced diet. Menu planning is good. Children are supported to treat mealtimes as social occasions with expected standards of behaviour. Children have choice about meals and are involved in planning and preparing meals.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Care staff have a full and thorough knowledge and understanding of the school's policies and procedures that are designed to keep children safe. There are clear procedures for responding to child protection concerns and the school has effective links with the local safeguarding board. Training for staff is of good quality and is updated. Children recognise that staff are actively concerned in keeping them safe. Policies and procedures are actively implemented to ensure children are able to enjoy privacy and security, and are treated with respect at all times. Staff respond in a professional and consistent way to allegations of bullying and children are fully supported when incidents occur. Measures of control are based on the purposeful encouragement of acceptable behaviour. There is consistent and effective communication about children's behaviour between education and care staff. Children know what standards of behaviour are expected and what responses they can expect from staff. Incidents of restraint are recorded but do not always provide evidence of the involvement of children in subsequent discussions of these incidents with staff.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The residential contribution to education is very well established. It involves close liaison between care and education staff and this is fully recognised as contributing to the educational achievement of children. Residential staff give very active practical and emotional support to any children who have difficulties with attendance and punctuality. Children are actively encouraged by staff to take part in leisure activities both inside the school and in the community. Staff share their own interests and enthusiasms with children and encourage them to try out new activities and interests. Children's individual interests are actively encouraged and supported. The school has explicitly identified how it will support individual children's needs. Staff are fully open to addressing a wide range of possible needs. The school has developed a number of effective links with other agencies that are involved with supporting children. Children find staff approachable and are confident that will receive any help they need. The school responds

quickly and in innovative ways when children require assistance in an emergency or at short notice.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Relationships between care staff and children are positive. They are based on establishing clear and consistent boundaries, within which staff demonstrate they value the views and opinions of young people. Families of children are provided with good information and are given regular opportunities to be involved in the care of their children. Children are encouraged to remain in contact with their families and staff give effective support to make this contact possible. Admissions to the school are planned and the child and their family are supported to be actively involved in every stage of the admission and subsequent reviews of progress. Each child has a placement plan. Children are aware of their plan but the evidence that they have been actively involved is not always demonstrable. Each child has a key worker who provides active support in accordance with the issues and needs identified in the placement plan. The placement plans are general and non specific and not are easy for staff or children to access or use. They do not provide an effective working tool for staff to use to support children's care. The head of care is planning to review the format and practice of placement planning for all children who use the residential facility. Placement plans are subject to an annual review and end of term summary record. The issues identified in these processes are not always consistently recorded and do not always relate to one another.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Children are well supported by staff to make choices about their clothing outside school time. Staff work purposefully with children to encourage them to take a pride in their appearance. For example, children are provided with items of school uniform in the event of any clothing not being available. The school is developing its support to children who are leaving. There are plans to create more accommodation and support to focus specifically on practical skills such as cleaning, cooking, budgeting and shopping. Children are encouraged to take control over their personal finances. After school activities include the development of practical skills such as the use of computers and cooking. Staff are knowledgeable about young people's development and have developed effective links with other agencies such as Connexions. The location of the school is well suited to the purpose of the school. Its physical layout and resources provide good quality support to children. The location promotes easy access to the local communities in which most children live.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The school has had significant sickness absence of residential care staff during the year, particularly that of the head of care. The development and implementation of its management systems and practices has not progressed as has been intended. There are a number of areas such as the development of care plans and staff training, where the care team can only access support from within the school rather than from the local authority responsible for the service. For example the school has created its own filing system and structure for each child in the residential units. This file is used in both the education and care settings. This arrangement means that the care team is not able to hold and manage the information on children in such

a way as to provide effective documentary assistance in identifying and monitoring children's needs. There are plans to review the structure and management of the children's files. Care staff are expected to develop their own systems for documentation relating to residential care and the structure and content of files as there is no standard 'county' format. Files are organised inconsistently and there is no evidence that they are regularly monitored or audited by senior residential staff. The supervision of staff has not been provided in accordance with the national minimum standards. Where supervision has taken place it has not been recorded. Staff are supported by their managers and feel able to access assistance and advice whenever it is needed. Although all staff have National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) or are participating in NVQ training, there is no overall structured training programme for residential care staff. There are limited training opportunities for the staff. Staff do not have a personal development plan. Overall outcomes for children are good. Children receive effective support from experienced and committed staff. Children are clearly comfortable in working with all members of the care team. The systems underpinning the work of care staff do not always reflect the work that is carried out by staff.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure each child has a clear written health care plan or similar document (NMS 14)
- ensure prior written permission for health care treatment for each child is obtained from a person or body with parental responsibility for that child (NMS 12)
- ensure at least one staff member on each shift and in each building where children sleep holds a current first aid qualification (NMS 12)
- ensure children are given an opportunity to discuss incidents of challenging behaviour and restraint (NMS 10)
- ensure children are involved in establishing the content and reviewing of their care plans (NMS 17)
- ensure each child has a clear and specific placement plan that is effectively reviewed (NMS 17)
- ensure a senior member of staff monitors and signs each child's placement plan and personal file each half term (NMS 32)
- ensure staff have access to training programmes which address the issues detailed in Appendix 2 of the guidance provided by the National Minimum Standards (NMS 29)

- ensure all staff receive at least one and a half hours one to one supervision from a senior member of staff each half term (NMS 30).



## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for residential special school

#### Being healthy

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

**Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

**Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Making a positive contribution

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)

- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

**Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

**Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

**Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**